

# National Catholic Theater Conference

PRODUCTION CALENDAR

Vol. 2

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No. 7.

Election Returns

Greetings from Officers and Executive Committee Members

First Objective - Membership Drive

Since Last We Met

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Introducing your new Official Staff:-

Chairman.....	Mr. Charles Costello
Vice Chairman.....	Mrs. Christopher Wyatt
Secretary-Treasurer....	Miss Helen Purcell
Executive Committee	
Members.....	Sister M. Alphonse, O.S.U.
	Reverend T. F. Carey, O.P.
	Reverend Robert E. O'Kane
	Miss Margaret Passmore
	Mr. Courtenay Savage
	Miss Genevieve Sullivan

Congratulations to the Conference on the selection of so competent a staff. With each member a theatre - maker in his own right and with his interest in N.C.T.C. proved by active support of the organization and its ideals, Catholic Theatre is assured of a progressively active Conference.

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GREETINGS      FROM      YOUR      OFFICERS

Mr. Costello

Mrs. Wyatt

At the risk of being trite, I must truthfully say that I was surprised to learn that I was to be your new Chairman. Although I am pleased at the honor you have conferred upon me, nevertheless I am quite fearful of my own shortcomings. For me to fill an office that has had such capable leadership in the past, will by no means be easy. From the men who occupied the chair before me, I shall take example. The courage, determination, imagination, intelligence, and self-sacrifice that each of these men put into the service of the Conference, has been the source of much inspiration to me.

Until I have conferred with the members of the Executive Board via the air-mail route, I can make no announcements regarding our future plans. Of this I am confident, that the newly elected board members feel as I do that we are here to serve you. This is your organization, existing for the "advancement of common standards and the development of common action."

The realization of this objective, however depends ultimately upon you. There can be no exchange of ideas or ideals for the common good, unless these are forthcoming from the individual members of the Conference. Atheistic and materialistic successes in the present world conflict and the precariousness of a post-war civilization, make such action mandatory of all of us. If the contributions which we make to the morale of both the home front and the war front are to be noticeable, and if our advancement of culture is to be realized, we had better unite our forces instantly. O, for the zeal of a Francis Xavier, to do for Christ, to die for Christ, and Christ alone desire. How can we make His ways known to the masses through the theatre? There's a big job ahead of us reaching into the highways and byways, affronting the devil in his own territory - administering to the lease of these in His name.

Asking your wholehearted cooperation and assuring you of my earnest desire to continue the great work my predecessors have set up for us, I am

Sincerely yours,

Charles S. Costello, Chairman.

Ed: At a sacrifice of their original graciousness these messages have been cut to include a maximum variety of ideas in limited space.

Considerably overcome by the unexpected honour of being elected Vice President of the National Catholic Theatre Conference, I pledge most fervently my enthusiasm for its ideals and my hope for a year of great accomplishment with Miss Purcell able to give regular hours of active work in the office.

A story told to me about the last war seems an incentive to our growing interest in high school groups. At one of the private boys' schools in New York, great emphasis is laid each season on a Shakespeare production, and by the time rehearsals are over, the whole school usually knows the script by heart. When some St. Bernard boys found themselves neighbours in the trenches in France, they found their best comfort in the long anxious hours of inaction Macbeth or Julius Caesar or As You Like It, throwing the lines to each other to test their memory. And how the other boys envied their early training. I hope very much that out of the high schools we interest in our program may come the leaders for a finer, broader, more and more distinguished and idealistic Catholic Theatre in the post war world.

Miss Purcell

September 1st the Conference goes on business hours - not full time yet, but the better part of the week. You can imagine then how keenly I anticipate another term, for despite the thorough pleasure that rewarded even spare-time efforts, there was always the nagging certainty that no organization could gather momentum in late-hour expediences.

This year with consecutive time at our disposal we look for real achievements. Membership, research on new and unknown plays, canteen entertainment, high school dramatics - these are just a few of the problems we must tackle immediately.

Will you help us in their solving? The assurance of your interest is our sole guarantee of a stronger organization representative of Catholic Theatre.

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AND FROM YOUR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Sister M. Alphonse, O.S.U.

Miss Passmore

As for goals what better can we desire than to attain those set forth by our first President, Reverend Father Dinneen, S.J. In 1937 Father and his assistants pioneered with a new idea: N.C.T.C. Within six years the association has established itself. We of the present must hold fast the traditions set and progress toward the common standards and the development of common action in Catholic Theatre. In this progress we should aim at Catholic Theatre in its big, catholic meaning, stripped of all puritanical trappings; the production of plays by member groups that satisfy all requirements of good drama with, as Father Urban Nagle, O.P. says, "a correct catholic philosophy," such a philosophy placed in good artistic form.

Father Carey, O.P.

Because the Catholic Theatre Conference is still a young organization, it faces many of the problems which confronted it at birth. These problems may be best summed up in the basic purpose of the Conference - "to establish a Catholic Theatre". Two essential ingredients of such an establishment are: an audience which will support Catholic Theatre and new scripts which make Catholic Theatre possible. The future theatre public is the high school student of today. His interest in good theatre is a cultural and educational product. The Conference's first field of action is to serve this growing population and then follow it into parish, college and experimental little theatres with constant suggestions for better theatre. And for all these stages new scripts reflecting the Catholic tradition are most needed.

Father O'Kane

Any program of production or entertainment has no place today unless it is directly concerned with DEFENSE. The theatres' war programs of entertainment for those in Service seem second only to the primary war program of production. What better goal can all N.C.T.C. members strive for than to use all talent and means at disposal for national defense entertainment to bring about a speedy victory! I should like to forward the idea of a Catholic Stage Door Canteen in every city and town where there is a Catholic theatrically-minded group.

May I express my sincere greetings and congratulations to all the newly elected officers and members of the Executive Committee, and my deep appreciation to those who, by their vote, expressed their confidence in me. I trust that through my efforts as a member of the Executive Committee I may be able to make an intelligent and productive contribution to the Conference commensurate with your faith. May we all unite to keep Catholic Theatre alive and progressing despite our many handicaps of manpower shortage, so that our Service Men and Women will have it to return to after they victoriously ring down the curtain on the theatre of war.

Mr. Savage

War years are tough years for theatre. People are looking for escape, theatre is a natural outlet, yet (and this is particularly true of semi-professional and amateur theatre) because of the scarcity of men, casting a play frequently has become so difficult that productions have been abandoned. Still the show can go on. It will have to. Perhaps a few members of the Conference can be roused to the writing point. After all, Mr. Sherif couldn't find an all male play for his Club members, so in a state of desperation he wrote "Journey's End." If every Conference member were to devote a quiet hour to "desperation" thinking over the possibility of an all woman play, we might get two or three good ones. Finding suitable plays has always been a major job, - right now it is a challenge.

Miss Sullivan

Of course our goal won't be different fundamentally, during this period, from what we consider the basic idea of the Conference. What will be different, perhaps, will be that there may be a shifting of emphasis - existing conditions compelling us to play up other phases of Catholic Theatre.

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## FIRST OBJECTIVE - MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

The first item on our 43-44 agenda is a membership drive, and the first line of that offensive is renewal of all 42-43 memberships. Send your check or money order today, please.

## PICTURES FOR PUBLICITY

Have you pictures of the big scenes in last year's productions? Send us a few so your group will be represented in our pictorial supplement.

Deadline: October 15th. They should be "glossies."

## SINCE LAST WE MET

Dayton - Blackfriars produced Department of Agriculture's script It's Up To You in June. The Friars earned commendation for their part in the performance, but apparently the audience and motion picture operator didn't realize the title applied to that production as well as to the food front in wartime.

Detroit - Catholic Theatre of Detroit's latest innovation was a mid-summer production for which The Royal Family was the choice. A successful venture worth repeating was the verdict.

Dubuque - Using the summer session's production of Kind Lady as a dress rehearsal, Father Schroeder of Loras College Players has a headstart on the opening of his fall season. Boarded up windows, cockney accent, heart spells --- all are in readiness.

New York - Blackfriars' first offering will be Career Angel, the original script produced first by Cathedral College in Brooklyn last spring. Since that time some rewriting has made the orphanage comedy doubly sure fire.

Pittsburgh - Catholic Theatre Guild, recovering from a major success with Tinker's Dam, started planning early for its opening fall production. Sorry, but Murder in a Nunnery is not available at this writing. Watch the Production Calendar for prompt word of its release. Guild members said good-bye to Mary Clancy Boley, one of the founders of the Pittsburgh Guild and an enthusiastic Conference member, when she left in June for Fayetteville, N.C.

## GUEST BOOK AND CORRESPONDENCE NOTES

Elsie Martin, hostess in charge of entertainment for Service Men at the Richmond Guild's Catholic Stage Door Canteen, shrugged off New York's warm weather and went to work collecting information and ideas to make her canteen an outstanding hit with Richmond's on-leave visitors.

Preceding the arrival in September of Father Schroeder and Father Donahue of Loras College come rumors of an anticipated one act play radio contest in the Dubuque area this season - a solution to the transportation problem. As soon as details are complete, we'll tell you how the plan is to work.

Among our early renewers is Loyola College Playshop of Baltimore, to whom we extend a sincere welcome. Other old friends and supporters to be with us this year are Loyola Community Theatre; Richmond Catholic Theatre Guild; Dramatic Association, College of St. Elizabeth; Queens's Company, St. Joseph College; Catholic Theatre of Detroit.

Micaela Martinez, stage designer of San Francisco Catholic Theatre Guild, recently commissioned to design a mural, triptych, and set of stations for the Navy Chapel at Treasure Island, is carrying forward the splendid use of her fine talent in setting "the stage for the greatest Drama in the world."

## HOLLYWOOD AND BROADWAY

While New York has devoted most of its producing attention this summer to musical revivals - four old favorites on the boards at once - word comes from Hollywood of box office successes for Behind the Rising Sun, Emmet Lavery's picturization of the Japanese comparable to his successful Hitler's Children.

## MISS SULLIVAN CONTINUES

That's how it's been here in San Francisco. For one thing, we're working more in the schools, and it is gratifying not only to see immediate results but to realize that when the Guild resumes production we will have this new crop of young theatre-minded people who will have even higher standards than some of the first Guild recruits.

